DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 422 581 CS 216 472

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TITLE	Genre and Gender: Questions in the Post-Theory Classroom.
PUB DATE	1998-04-00
NOTE	18p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English Conference on College Composition and Communication (49th, Chicago, IL, April 1-4, 1998).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Feminist Criticism; Higher Education; Literary Genres; *Sex Differences; *Theory Practice Relationship; *Writing (Composition); *Writing Instruction; Writing Research
IDENTIFIERS	*Composition Theory; Gender Issues; *Genre Approach; Womens Ways of Knowing

ABSTRACT

A major tenet of feminist rhetorical theory is that there exists a "women's way" of writing. At the same time, much writing deals with the strong shift in the relationship between theory and practice in the fields of literature, composition, and cultural rhetoric. A study examined the intersection of genre and gender theory with the actual writing of students, and results indicated that practitioners have to be cautious when translating theory into their classrooms. In two sophomore writing sections ("205-one"), for a variety of genres encompassing the personal narrative (diary, letter, speech, etc.) students created a reader/writer's history of themselves at the start and the end of the course. In two other sophomore sections ("205-two"), concentration was on going deeply into only three genres--the personal essay, the argument essay, and the academic research essay. With the initial inventories of 205-one, while roughly half of the students fit traditional stereotypes (females preferring the diary and males preferring argument) the other half broke the mold; findings were similar in 205-two. Excerpts from student writings illustrate student voices and teacherly response. One tentative conclusion can be reached: most students found an extra thrill in writing "new" genres for them. Females took to the public speech; males plunged into the private diary. In these student reflections, theory and practice met in a post-theory classroom; the instructor was prompted to re-design the curriculum to explore current ideas on gender and genre. (NKA)

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GENRE AND GENDER

Questions in the Post-Theory Classroom

by Gillisann Haroian-Guerin

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One of the major tenets of feminist rhetorical theory, commonly held and often unchallenged, is that there exists a "women's way" of writing. Carol Gilligan supplied the major fuel for that idea with her work, *In A Different Voice: Psychological Theories and Women's Development*, where she delineated that women have a different way of morally knowing. Gilligan's work became seminal in her field, prompting a host of texts like Mary Belenky's *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind*. Since then, innovative scholars in composition theory have sought to initiate a conversation on the application of Gilligan's and Belenky's discoveries to the field of rhetoric. They want to know if women have a different way of writing, too.

At the same time, much writing is making us aware of the strong shift in the relationship between theory and practice in the fields of literature, composition, and cultural rhetoric. In recent issues of *College English*, Kurt Spellmeyer's "After Theory: From Textuality to Attunement with the World" and Marshall Gregory's "The Many-Headed Hydra of Theory vs. the Unifying Mission of Teaching" have described for us the dawn of the "post-theory" era and have pointed toward the new implications this era has for our classrooms. Now is an opportune moment for teachers to overcome the theory-practice dichotomy, levelling the relation between the two as we shape post-theory classrooms that can be sites to test old theories and generate new ones.

With these two trends operating concurrently, the claim for a "woman's way of knowing"

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and the call to actively shape the "post-theory" classroom, I decided to test the feminist theories on women's writing in my classroom by inviting, then attending closely, to student testimonies on this issue. I began an on-going study of the intersection of genre and gender theory with the actual writing of my students, and the results indicate that we practitioners have to be cautious, discerning, and rigorously questioning when translating theory in our classrooms.

In the field of composition, one of the first ground-breaking studies in the realm of women's ways of writing was Elizabeth Flynn's "Composing as a Woman"; she examined papers by her students, arriving at the tentative conclusion that the narratives by her female students were more emphatic and personal than those by her male students, whom, she believed, evidenced a greater degree of individualism and competition in their writing. More recently, Pamela Gilbert's "Stoning the Romance: Girls as Resistant Readers and Writers" similarly presented the case that her female students were typically more seduced by romantic stories and ended up writing in that genre over, perhaps, an adventure story.

In response to these and like studies came Janis and Richard Haswell's "Gendership and the Miswriting of Students." In this empirical study, the Haswells show that many of the stereotypes we hold toward bias in the writing classroom are valid, but many others are not. The Haswells subjected two student essays, one by a female and one by a male, to peer critique and teacher critique, each group of readers consisting of 16 females and 16 males. "Our study focused on gender," they write. "The findings were disturbing and problematic. For instance, we documented a number of places where readers were affected by stereotypes or idiosynchratic preconceptions of the sex of the writer and its connections with writing instruction" (224). Many of the readers in the study considered female writers to be "ideationally impoverished" and male

writers to be "verbally inept," traditional tenets that often had little to do with the reality of the sample student essays in the Haswells' experiment.

As I contemplated the new and widely-held tenet that there is a "women's way" of writing, and by deduction therefore a "man's way," I came to the conclusion that I should introduce the idea of genre into a writing classroom that studies this tenet. If not, the students input would be naive in the sense that if the students were uninformed of the idea of genre—of romance tales versus argumentative essays—how could they contribute in the fullest to any conversation about their texts and ways of writing?

Specially, wasn't one of my goals to shape a post-theory classroom? To level the theory-practice hierarchy? To see where theory would lead us into new insights in our practice? To see where would theory break down? To do this, I needed to introduce theories into the classrooms and to my students to test these theories. In a post-theory spirit, then, I began to discuss genre theories with my students. I wanted them to enter our conversation, to make my classroom the site of theoretical talk. Moreover, if I had introduced genre theory to my students, their naive-condition about genre theories would have left me guessing to fill in the holes left by the students' limited ability to make informed conversation on genre. I wanted my students to participate in a keener way in our conversations. From this I hoped to generate some tentative knowledge about the true or false intersection of gender and genre theories with the actual writing of some individual students.

I'll term the first two sophomore writing courses in which I conducted this examination "205-one," and in those sections we began by co-exploring a variety of genres encompassing the personal narrative—the diary, journal, letter, speech, editorial, oral history, memoir and the

personal essay. Students created a reader/writer's history of themselves for these varied genres at the start and at the end of the course. In the second two sophomore writing courses, or the "205-two" sections, I concentrated on going more deeply into three genres only—the personal essay, the argument essay, and the academic research essay. With the initial inventories of 205-one, I discovered that while roughly half of the students fit the traditional stereo-types, of females preferring the diary and males preferring argument, the other half of the students broke the mold.[1] I was to discover similar findings in the 205-two sections.

I'm not going to initially give you some numbers and percentages. I have in my keeping all the students' work, reflective statements, and inventories, but to launch the discussion of my writing classroom with these would take the students' individuality and process it back into theory, that would defeat the goal of this paper to level the theory-practice hierarchy, to privelege the classroom more. As a dedicated practitioner, I'm going to offer you in the main my students' voices and my teacherly response to them. At the close, I shall offer some numbers on the most recent courses that I taught on genre, primarily to examine how such numbers and percentages do and do not represent the ways that female and male students react to different genres and to problematize the use of numbers and percentages for practitioners in the classroom.

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"In this genre [the personal essay], I tried to heal something that had been broken for more

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[1] I am going to use the initial and closing inventories as the base for presenting my conclusions on 205-one here for practical reasons. First, presenting all my discoveries during my semester with close to 40 students would take 100 pages. Second, the inventories comprise the students' actual testimonies about their writings and their views of themselves as writers, and in the postmodern spirit of heteroglossia, I want their voices to occupy some space in this study. Third, these inventories were usually reflective of their writing. For example, two female students who wrote that they didn't like writing the diary actually did produce poor diaries. Fourth, the students knew that their inventories were never to be graded or have anything to do with their grade, so the students could write without apprehension of being corrected or judged with a grade.

than four years. I don't know if my healing was successful, but I do know that this is one of the purposes of the personal essay to let the writer express something that is bothering his/her heart. I did express what was in my heart."

"Probably the best thing I like about this genre compared to the others is that we are able to be a little creative with it. The next two genres we will do are going to be very hard for me because they deal with fact and are so structured."

"I did not like what I was writing [the argument] because I had no true emotion in it. Feelings and personal experience were what made my last paper the caliber it was."

These are the words of sample male students.[2] In both 205-one and 205-two courses, nearly every male testified to liking personal genres. Among others, Jon Metcalf wrote that he had kept diaries when he was younger so that he'd have something to look back on when he was older. He favored the diary over the journal because the "events of our lives are not as important as the feelings and life-changes which those events evoke." In reference to every genre, Jon liked the more subjective over the more objective ones. Or, Ryan Bennett liked those readings and writings in which he or the author could "pour" all of their emotions out, adding that he always searches out the "personal movement" of the writer.

I did not perceive substantial differences in the topics or approaches to the personal essay by males versus females. There were the limited number of males who wrote about their greatest football game, but there were also the limited number of females who wrote about their greatest

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[2] This genre exercise is one I would like to keep if I ever writ. Here are other samples: "Like my memoir, my personal essay was filled with a lot of emotion.... There was a lot of emotion exhibited in those words, and I think it showed." Or, "I like writing in the personal genre because it allows me to put my thoughts down on paper in an informal way and be able to show feeling. This contrasts writing an academic essay where one must merely put down information on paper in a formal manner."

swim meet. The one topic most common among both males and females was the divorce of their parents. How this topic crossed gender boundaries is illustrated by one young man who wrote about the divorce of his parents to a female friend who was currently experiencing this to help her through the crisis.[5] This suggests to me that the current emphasis on gender differences in theory is not entirely suitable to the classroom where gender similarities arise as often. As teachers, we need to be careful how we introduce, translate, and *question* theory into our classrooms.

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"I found the editorial fun to write because I could be brutally honest."

"Writing the memoir has no practical use for the future. But writing the speech will help me out when I'm in a meeting, or need to make a public appearance.... I have always been someone who only enjoys doing things that will benefit me directly in the future.... Perhaps you could put letters in that are more professional."

"What I like least about writing in the personal essay genre is getting my feelings across to the readers. I like to tell a story with facts, not about how I feel during the whole piece. I like to give information, but I hate having to tell how that information affected me."

These are the statements of some female students who desired brutal honesty, professional writing, fierce competition, and the facts. My point here is not whether these four female students were typical, but that these four female students were real, warm bodies in my

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[5] Within the subject of divorce, I did perceive one difference. Some of the essays of the young males focused on their inability to communicate or deal with their fathers well during and after the divorce. It would seem, then, that the personal essay offered some male students an opportunity to address problematic father-son relationships. This observation, of course, does not impact directly on the academic aspect of writing personal criticism and prose, but it did impact on me as a teacher, for I realized that some male students have a greater need to experiment with personal writing to balance their limited ability to express emotion and ultimately to allow them to discover a fuller voice for themselves, a necessary step to strengthen all their writing.

classroom that I had to deal with on a daily basis. These young women were simply in a different headspace than that of some theorists who essentially equate the personal with the feminine. This was yet another reminder to me as a practitioner that we need to question theories and to voice our concern about the translation of theory into our classroom based on our experience there, a site full on individual and idiosyncratic students.

The hesitancy expressed in the testimonies above with personal writing I found particularly indicative of female student-athletes. In a 205-one class, I had the co-founders of the S.U. Women's Rugby Team, a hardy group. These female student-atheletes accounted for one-fifth to one-fourth of a class usually, and their love of individualism and competition was pronounced.[4]

The growing presence of female student-athletes in my courses made me question if, perhaps, our paradigm of the college cheerleader is archaic in that females no longer just dream of pom-poms but of blue ribbons also. Granted I teach at a university with a good number of Division One teams, but even elsewhere I wonder if the cheerleaders are now outnumbered greatly by the sportswoman in our classrooms. When I gave the first draft of this paper at the 1997 Wyoming Conference, I was reading of the 25th anniversary celebration of Title IX.

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[4] For those of you interested in reading more of this kind of student statements, here are two typical samples. Kristin Fraser was an All-America swimmer who underwent five shoulder surgeries due to her love of sport, her compelling desire to compete and to win:

"I approached the blocks ready to swim the face of luck, the 50 freestyle. It has the reputation for being the fastest and most exciting race in competitive swimming. This has always been my favorite race. It's chancy, fast, fiercely competitive and the difference between first and second place is usually one one-hundredth of a second."

Her sentiments are echoed by other female student-athletes like Ania Plocha, whose passages reveal not only a love of sport but sport as a source of feminism in her life; notice her commentary on the media's neglect of female athletes:

"I was a rower.... Quite simply, who I am today, I credit to that sport. Crew helped build for me positive self-esteem. Most importantly, crew taught me that I really can do anything as long as I believe in it hard enough.... I cleared off the bulletin board of newspaper clippings, the headlines always describing the boy's races while the girl's races were lucky to make the small print below the article; the numerous ribbons from winning and/or participating; the hard won metals.... pictures of our palms ripped open, pictures of us camping out at regattas under various tents...."

Whereas before Title IX the number of female athletes in the public schools was minimal, today fully one-third of females participate in school sports. News commentators noted that a big effect of Title IX was the top showing of American female athletes in the Summer Olympics. As I write this second draft for the 4Cs, I see again the top showing of American female athletes in the 1998 Winter Olympics. Whether we cheered Flo Jo or Kerri Strugg last summer, or Picabo Street and the Women's Hockey Team this winter, our popular culture has become infiltrated with images of women who go for the gold. And the large strides made in sports have been matched by strides made in other areas—the corporation, the political arena, or the sciences, to name just a few.

Even the female students who were not student-athletes revealed a practicality and energy in their lives and writing. For instance, the female students in 205-one and 205-two revealed that they liked to hone their argumentative skills, to write a good and forceful argument and to engage in a lively debate, a form that is often discussed as an oppositional male mode in our journals.[1] The work of Robert Connors is representative of this scholarship. In "Women's Reclamation of Rhetoric in Nineteenth-Century America," Connors laments the decline of agonism in colleges with the entry of large numbers of women into higher education. He details and laments this change during those decades when females began to be present in college classrooms: "Why did oral rhetoric, central to education since ancient Athens, the heart of the trivium, one of the first chairs at any university, decline so ruinously in forty years? That falloff can best be explained by the draining away of public agonism in colleges and the consequent collapse of the educational

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[1] Melissa Aab found reading Franz Kafka's "Letter to His Father" beneficial because it showed her that the use of "anecdotal evidence" is "interesting and...necessary in making [an] argument effective." Kerri Canzone said that she may never need to write an editorial, but she thought that it "greatly helped my arguing skills." Evelin Weber thought the letter writing aided her skills: "Letters I believed were casual. I never had thought of a letter as an argument. Knowing this and applying this helped me become a better writer.... This genre [showed] me that every writing piece...is supported by details, openness, and evidence."

tradition that had grown up to support it. Written composition—private, multimodal, interiorizing—could be the province of both men and women, public oratory, since it could no longer be the province of men only, ceased to satisfy male psychological needs and was allowed to fall into desuetude" (79)

My own experience in the classroom makes me question one of Connors' ideas, for I found that many female students find argument and debate to be as satisfying as males. It is true that Connors article goes into a more complex discussion of the other reasons that caused the decline of agonistic oratory. My purpose here is to suggest that the "camps" of our theorists, the masculinist and the feminist, are in a different space than the co-ed and dynamic classroom "camps" of our students. As teachers we have to be discerning couriers.

In this area of argument, for instance, as an individual I believe fully in the feminist theory of invitational rhetoric, an alternative to traditional agonistic argument, but as a teacher I have to consider how I'm going to introduce to top female student-athletes the "feminist" theory of invitational rhetoric that is non-competitve and non-individualistic. I also have to consider that certain other female students seem to thirst after traditional agonism in argument because they appear to be going through a necessary stage of assertiveness training and argument fulfills their needs during this stage. One female student found the argument genre valuable because she could finally feel free and confident in expressing her "own opinions and ideas." Writing a strong argument was a great boost to her self-esteem, as it was for another female who wrote that she favored the argument genre because "it taught me how to support my ideas."

And what was I to do with the young women who proudly proclaim like these three, "I have a lot of fun writing in an argumentative style because I always think I'm right," or "I am a

very argumentative type person and I enjoy thinking objectively about a topic," and "I have chosen to major in a field of study [Speech Communication] that is dependent on argumentation. this paper was another way for me to strengthen my skills that will be beneficial to my future." For these young women, I need to present with care the multiple modes of argument so as not to deny their individual needs, talents, or inclinations, both personal and professional.

I also found that when young women strikingly fulfilled the feminist theories on women being more emphatic, this led to an unexpected turn in the writing inclinations of these female students. I noticed that certain female students strongly valued public speaking—for a stereotypically feminine reason. The statements of many females indicated that the feminist theories are certainly correct that women are full of empathy and sympathy; the female students indicated that they found this desire to share and to help best fulfilled not in romantic and private tales but in the public genre of the speech, a form that afforded these female students with a good opportunity for self-expansion as thinkers, *feelers*, and writers.[6]

The female students also indicated that they'd had little exposure to the genre of the public speech and wished for more. This provoked me to speculate that members of one gender might like a genre to which they've had little contact because the new genre presents opportunities to expand the parameters of their writing and their writerly image.

This speculation seemed to hold true for males, who expressed enthusiasm when newly

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[6] Typical student testimonies were as follows: Adrianne Pete loved being her high school's valedictorian because it gave her the opportunity to give others "hope," to be a model, albeit a nervous one, of inspiration and success. In her lengthy declaration on speeches, Evelin Weber stated: "Speeches are great because they give you a chance to share what you truly feel deep down inside with someone else.... Doing a speech that is dear to my heart gave me a chance to open people's eyes and see the importance of friends." Taylor Sprague said that she had also discovered this ability to enlighten others when she had to give a speech for her sorority, and Jeannette Bernozzi likewise found "satisfaction" from all the research completed and the newfound ability to reach out to people when she gave a speech for "the unborn baby" in her communication class.

exposed to the genre of the diary. Some of the most dynamic and open diaries were kept by a clique of three young men, whom I privately baptized the "Dysfunctional Guys Group" in one of my Writing 205 sections, for they acted, *on the surface*, like the stereotypical Jerks. Their diaries showed anything but that. Anthony Iannone's discussion of his diary revealed that his social discomfort could be traced back to his parents' divorce when he was an adolescent, and he knew this: "One specific time in my life that I wrote voluntarily was during my parents' divorce. I kept a diary of all that went on in my household, especially all the miserable things that bothered me. It was suggested to me that I should let me feelings out on paper." Thus as a teacher I became aware that the diary affords certain males as much satisfaction as Robert Connors claims that public agonism does for many males.[7]

In sum, one tentative conclusion can be reached: most males and females found an extra thrill in writing "new" genres for them. Females took to the public speech; males plunged into the private diary. I could discern the pattern elsewhere. Females revealed that they liked the memoir because, like the speech, they were able to transform a personal moment into a public text with meaning for others. Males stated that they also favored the personal essay because, like the diary, it gave them a much needed space to discuss emotions.

I also began to discern more clues in the piles of student reflections, clues that reveal some new twists on the current theories on genre and gender. A recent overview of personal writing in

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[7] Trent Dorroh's diary was a vivid description of his high emotions upon the news that he was about to have a new half-brother when his aging father re-married a younger woman. Another young man's diary was a graphic account of his struggle against his deepening alcoholism and suicidal tendencies. Even those males not undergoing emotional crisis often enough found the diary rewarding. "Keeping a diary for class was interesting," writes Andrew Lampach. "I didn't have any problems keeping it and I was amazed at what I was thinking about all the time." Similarly Michael Riff penned, "The diary unit scared me the most. I have never kept a diary before this class. I always thought that there really was not that much to write about. I was afraid that the diary section would be the downfall for me. To my surprise, I enjoyed writing in the diary the most."

academy was completed by Joseph Harris. In "Person, Position, Style," Harris was not examining personal writing of male and female students, as I was, but his analysis of personal writing of professional writers confirmed that males have a clear historical perference, even domination, in this genre. Harris pointed out that the personal essay tradition has largely been in the hands of men, such as Montaigne, Thoreau, Emerson, Orwell, and others, contrary to a notion in academia today that it belongs to women, such as Jane Tompkins, Nancy Sommers, Susan Miller, and other accomplished academics. The women seem latecomers to the genre.

This "discovery" that Harris offers to the community of scholars and theorists has long been everyday knowledge with those practitioners who have attended with care to their male students who seek out and enjoy personal writing. In fact, not only by attending but by asking male students for their responses to personal writing, I discovered one troubling reason that male students might like personal writing so much—and certain females may not—and this reason was in accord with feminist theories on certain deeply-rooted insecurities of females. In the reflective letters of my male students, a few revealed astutely that they liked writing in their own voices, one typical statement being, "What I liked best about writing the personal essay was that it gave me the chance to really work in my own voice first." The confidence of some young men in their voices partially explains why they like personal writing. Once I had identified this, I found that it carried over into writing arguments, too, like the one male who proudly admitted his primitive satisfaction in proving to other that he is right and went to brag about his affinity for logic and argument.

I then examined the reflective letters of the female students to discover that a few openly revealed insecurity about their voices, and this actually left these females uncomfortable with

personal writing. "My least favorite thing about this genre is getting across how strongly you feel about something without 'blabbing' on and on for pages about nothing." Clearly this female student devalued her own voice, applying a belittling and stereotypical adjective to her feminine talk. Other females made statements in this vein, such as one claiming that writing argument was difficult because she feared coming across as a "pompous jerk," another de-valuing her speculations as "ramblings," or another constantly doubting that she could build a good argument by just using "me." As a teacher, I was glad to become aware that some females do not privelege their voices as much as some males do so that I could somehow address this issue with my female students.

In these student reflections, I can see that theory and practice met well for me as a teacher in my post-theory classroom, for the scholarly conversation begun by Flynn, Gilbert, the Haswells and others prompted me to re-design my curriculum to explore current ideas on gender and genre, and I gained from it some insights that theorists might contemplate in return.

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At the end of each course, I ask students to write reflective pieces on the major writing completed. Ten students chose to do so in the first of the 205-two sections, and thirteen in second 205-two section. I shall deal with numbers here, with how many female versus male students named the personal essay, the argument essay, or the research essay as their best or least favorite. The numbers do confirm current feminist theories. A clear majority of females—three females over no males—in the first 205-two and six females over two males in the second 205-two—identified the personal essay as their favorite, a slight majority of males—four males to two females in the first 205-two—identified the argument essay as their favorite. In the second 205-

two section, however, the number was even, with three females and three males specifying the argument essay as their favorite. If males and females in both classes shared any feelings on one essay, it was the lengthy and complicated research essay which the greater majority in of males and females in both courses named their least favorite.

As a practitioner, however, as one reading the reflective pieces, the testimonies, written by students, I can see how these numbers do and do *not* represent the case. First, the numbers reveal that when personal writing is taught, it might shut out larger numbers of males than teaching argument shuts out females. Cultural influences might explain this in that females are more exposed to, trained in, and become accustomed to argument in colleges and the work place than males do with personal writing. Despite the possibility of this, to go by the percentages and claim that personal writing shuts out more males is simply not true; that is the problem with numbers. Of the males identifying the argument essay as their favorite, many also mention how good a writing experience was the composing of the personal essay, too; they just liked constructing an argument better. As a sample, one male stated that he entered the course favoring the personal essay, then moved onto mastering and liking other genres: "When I came to this class in January I thought that I write the best if I write about personal things. But, as the semester progressed I found out other interesting things which I did with pleasure."

Similarly, those females naming the personal essay their favorite also liked the argument essay quite a bit, they just favored more the personal essay. This female student's response was in line with many others: "Out of all the essays, I probably favor the personal essay more. I did however enjoy both the academic research and argument essay too. I liked the argument because I love to argue and make people see my point of view."

As a practitioner, then, the most important point that I bring away from this kind of analysis is that numbers shut out individuality, downplay the varying shades, gradations, and tones of learning in females and males.

Listening to the students' individual voices, I can complicate things further. In the first 205-two section, the females who disliked argument stated they did so only because they didn't care for the topic. This might point back toward feminist theory, meaning that when the females inclined toward personal topics, they favored Belenky's "connected knowing." In the second section of 205-two, the females inclined more toward claiming that argument in traditional, established modes took away from the individuality of their writing. This can be another pointer toward feminist theory, for these females, in prizing "individuality," might have been assigning the highest value to the person, the personal. Interestingly, for me as a classroom teacher, I knew most of the female students who disliked argument to be among the most confident and outspoken in the class, they would always be the first to argue--about anything. Of these females, one who listed the research essay as her favorite went on to identify the element she did like about that genre: "... the moments in the paper when I had two well-educated and respected sources battling their arguments." Perhaps confidence in the personal makes for women who argue well.

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This brings us full cycle back to the "new design."[8]

How else did theory and practice intersect in my classroom?

The immediate result of the student inventories and reflections was to open me up to the

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[8] I gave the first draft of this work on a panel, "The New Design: Post-Theory and the Practitioner," that I initiated for the 1997 Wyoming Conference whose theme was generating "really useful knowledge" in our classrooms.

individual reality of each of my students, and that is "really useful knowledge."[9] The Haswells' study pointed to the persistent misconceptions we hold about "male" versus "female" writing that affect our response to student writing, a state that we classroom teachers cannot too readily interrogate among ourselves as we respond every day to the writing of our students.

How ignorant I might have seemed to the young woman who loves "brutally honest" editorials if I had blithely and directly translated theory into my classroom and labelled that form of energetic argument as a male mode. She was an independent and spirited sort, but if she had been instead an insecure student, such statements might have quieted her, an awful fate for her in a writing studio. The young woman may not have wanted to admit her "cross-dressing" in her reading and writing, as Haswell and Haswell call her dilemma of liking the Other's supposed writing form, in this case "male" argument. In some cases, our theories are the clothing that we put on our students, our theories have begun to impose our version of cross-dressing in the classroom.

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[9] Here might be on hypothetical mis-application of such theory in the classroom. The young man who wrote that "it was suggested" he keep a diary to stay in touch with and handle his feelings in difficult times was hinting that he was seeing a therapist, and having been allowed this hint on his diary keeping, the young man later came to my office to discuss and then write outright in his texts of his counseling. How damaging might have been my response if I had not conducted the individual inventories and had blandly repeated to the class the reigning tenet that diaries are in the main important to young girls. After such a statement, the young man might have been reluctant to open up while writing in or talking about his diary.

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